



Wivenhoe Town Council

MINUTES of the Full Town Council meeting held in the Council Chamber on Monday 19 January 2026 at 7.00pm **Chair Approved**

Present: Cllr Guy (Chair), Cllr Hailes-Morley, Cllr Burke, Cllr Evans, Cllr Blomeley, Cllr Harmon, Cllr Aldis, Cllr Maltby, Cllr Andrew, Cllr Widgery, Cllr Boughton, Cllr Luxford-Vaughan, ECC Cllr Cory, Peter Kay (Public Transport Representative), Emma Buckley (RFO), Jo Beighton-Emms (Town Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

Public Questions: None

PART A

FC/01.26/01 Apologies for absence: Cllrs Boughton and Luxford-Vaughan. Their apologies were accepted.

FC/01.26/02 Declarations of interest: None.

FC/01.26/03 Minutes of previous meetings:

The minutes of the full town council meeting held on 15 December 2025 were proposed by Cllr Burke, seconded by Cllr Widgery and approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

FC/01.26/04 Reports from Members of County and City Councillors & Public Transport Representative:

- a) Cllr Cory thanked former Cllr Multon for his time on the council.
He reported on the following:
 - a) The CCC budget will be issued soon.
 - b) He has chased repairs to potholes on Clingoe Hill. He confirmed that pothole repairs will not be transferred to WTC after devolution.
 - c) He has chased the repairs to the closed area of pavement on the High Street and will share the contacts at ECC for all councillors to do the same.
 - d) The school streets projects at Millfields and Broomgrove will go ahead in the February half term holiday. Further information to follow.
 - e) Cllr Harmon asked about the issue of blocked drains. Cllr Cory said that he will continue to work on this issue.
 - f) He will also chase the proposed works to Ferry Marsh.

Cllr Maltby arrived.

- b) Cllr Luxford-Vaughan reported that she will share the new national planning policy framework once it is published. She is chasing the opening of the bus lane on Clingoe Hill.
There was a good response to the Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation with CCC.
- c) Peter Kay reported that the next road closure will be The Avenue which will affect bus services.

FC/01.26/05 Proposal by Cllr Guy- Proposal by Cllr Guy; 'For WTC to approve the council's 2026/2027 budget presented by the Finance Committee and to set the precept for 2026/2027'.

Cllr Guy reported that the budget has been prepared by the RFO and is balanced and prudent. The precept increase proposed is 5.8% which is less than the previous year.

The councillors considered the proposed budget. The RFO highlighted the increase in the budget for legal fees and for elections.

Cllr Maltby queried the decrease in the budget for the Environment Committee. Cllr Guy explained that the Planning Committee needed additional funds for work on the Local Plan. Also, that the Environment Committee have allocated funds to the Funding Officer to seek grants.

Cllr Maltby said that she can't then vote for this budget and let the Environment Committee be reliant on grants- she felt that the committee was being penalised for being creative.

Cllr Guy proposed that WTC approves the council's budget for 2026/7, this was seconded by Cllr Widgery with all in favour, with the exception of Cllr Maltby who voted against and Cllr Evans who abstained. They asked for their votes to be recorded. Carried.

Cllr Guy proposed the recommendation to request the 2026/27 precept of £502,615 and to accept the recommended budget, with an expenditure of £591,924 and income of £618,339. The band D figure for council tax for parish purposes would be £171.13, which is a 5.9% increase from last year.

This is an annual increase of £9.52 to the council taxpayer. This breaks down to 79p per month or 18p per week extra.

This was seconded by Cllr Hailes-Morley with all in favour. Carried.

FC/01.26/06 Committees:

- a. Planning: Cllr Burke reported that the WTC response to the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation was submitted on time. A meeting with the CCC S106 officer has been arranged.

Cllr Cory left the meeting.

- b. Finance & Personnel:
The councillors considered a report from the RFO with recommended increases to fees and hire charges for 2026/7, which is attached as **Appendix A**.

Cllr Guy proposed that fees and charges are increased as detailed in the report. This was seconded by Cllr Harmon with all in favour. Carried.

Cllr Guy proposed that Cllr Multon is removed as a signatory to the WTC bank account, and that Cllr Luxford-Vaughan is added as a signatory. This was seconded by Cllr Aldis, with all in favour. Carried

The RFO reported that Cllr Multon will be removed as signatory from the WTC account.

- c. Environment: Cllr Maltby reported that the committee will be meeting on 28 January. Cllr Evans reported that he has arranged a meeting with Bernard Jenkin MP to discuss local developers including Tarmac.

- d. Estates: Cllr Burke reported that the Sports Pitches Working Group had met and representatives from local football teams are keen to work with us.
She thanked the Town Clerk and Andy Hearn for getting the resurfacing work to the High Street car park completed.
A meeting will be arranged with the solicitor regarding the Fisherman's Store.

FC/01.26/07 RFO Report:

- a. RFO Report: The councillors considered a previously circulated report which is attached as **Appendix B**.
- b. Approve list of payments previously circulated: The councillors considered the previously circulated list of payments which is attached as **Appendix C**. The list was proposed for payment by Cllr Widgery. This was seconded by Cllr Guy, with all in favour. Carried.
- c. Approve the Bank Reconciliation: The councillors considered the previously circulated Bank Reconciliation which is attached as **Appendix D**. It was proposed for approval by Cllr Widgery. This was seconded by Cllr Guy, with all in favour. Carried.
- d. The Budget: See above.

FC/01.26/08 Working Groups:

- a) Wiv Works: Cllr Harmon reported that she is looking again at a Sunday market in Wivenhoe. She is exploring with local businesses who wants to be involved in the Wiv Works project and looking to get new signs for the Business Centre.
- b) Community Hub: Cllr Guy reported that the feasibility study should be received soon. This will be followed by a consultation process. The tender invitation for the playpark will be issued next week.
- c) Devolution: No update.
- d) Health & Wellbeing: Cllr Hailes-Morley reported that the Town Clerk is chasing the release of S106 funds for the outdoor gym. The group met with the Youth Hub to help them find more volunteers and users. They will be providing an article for the newsletter.
There will be a lunch to mark International Women's Day, and the group are planning to arrange a men's health day.
- e) Community Engagement: Cllr Guy asked for article ideas for the next newsletter by 26 January. Cllr Evans asked to join this group.
- f) Car Parks: Cllr Burke reported that the resurfacing work has been completed. She gave an interview for BBC radio Essex.
Objectors to the introduction of car park charges will be contacted and signs are being ordered.
- g) Sporting Trust: No update.
- h) Wivenhoe Community Charity: Cllr Hailes-Morley reported that she is working on the website which should be going live soon.
- i) Events: A meeting needs to be arranged.
- j) Local Plan: No Further Update.
- k) Mayoral Activities: Cllr Guy reported on his attendance at the ROAC lunch on Christmas day with which he had been incredibly impressed. He has a number of events with CCC coming up.

FC/01.26/09 Town Clerk's Report: The Town Clerk reported that she has been working on legal matters to be covered under Part B and the works to the High Street car park.

FC/01.26/10 Date and time of the next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Monday 16 February 2026 at 7pm.

FC/01.26/11 Exclusion of press and public: In accordance with Paragraph 1 (2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Council is invited to consider if the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item(s) owing to the confidential nature of the business.

Cllr Evans proposed that the press and public are excluded from the meeting as per item FC/01.26/11. This was seconded by Cllr Hailes-Morley, with all in favour. Carried.

Cllr Blomeley and members of the public left the meeting.

PART B

FC/01.26/12 Update from the Chair on the High Street Car Park.

The Town Clerk holds a note of this part of the meeting.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20.51.

Appendix A

RFO Report- Fees and Charges

Wivenhoe Town Council
Fees and Charges Review January 2026
William Loveless Hall

An increase of 5% was implemented for 25/26, the previous years from 2020/21 an increase of 7.5% was applied. The charges for the WLH are still low compared to the other local venues and there is high demand for the hall bookings, and it is regularly used by local groups.

In January 2025, it was previously agreed that the weekend rates would be increased by £5 per hour for all hirers, the weekend rates were not increased again on the 1st April 2025. This increase was to allow for the extra cleaning that is required at the weekend when the hall is booked by multiple hirers.

Due to the increased hire, the running costs for heating and lighting have increased, maintenance work has also increased with more cleaning and repairs being undertaken. NMW has also increased, which is also a factor for the hall.

The Energy contracts have been renewed, although the council has still not been able to obtain an energy contract to sell any excess energy created from the solar panels. There has been a steady increase in overheads, due to the increases from suppliers. This year energy improvements have been made in the hall, due to grants received. We will be able to compare and report on any savings next year from these investments. The market is similar to previous years and other than potential energy savings, there are no other savings expected for the hall and inflation is predicted to be between 2-3% in 2026.

There were plans in 2025 to renew the furniture and carpets in the Wyvern Room, but this has yet to be completed and would need to be looked at again in 2026/27.

	23/24	24/25	25/26 (Estimate)
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Overheads (total)	£7,290	£8,380	£9,699
Maintenance	£6,956	£1,649	£1,398
Income	£32,665	£37,853	£29,057
New Equipment	£3,167	£34,847 (Grant received) Cost of grant £4,580	£1,820
Maintenance & New Equipment/Income	31%	16.6%	11.1%
Overheads/Income	22.3%	22.3%	33.4%

It is recommended that the hall charges are again increased for the year 26/27 on 1st April 2026. To keep the hire prices uncomplicated, it is recommended to increase the hires by either £1 or 50p. This works out between 2% and 5%. As recommended last year, in order to close the gap between the non-resident charges and class commercial rates, it would be recommended to not increase the non-resident rates again this year.

Storage in the Wyvern Room – These charges are currently £4.50 monthly for the lockers. The first increase in these charges was in 2024/25. Larger areas for other groups are charged at £7 monthly. It would be recommended to keep these at £4.50 and £7 this year.

Moving Image currently pay £10 per month for the fridge/freezer which is kept in the hall and inclusive of electricity use, it is recommended to keep this at £10.

The Council has to pay for the licences, to enable music and films to be played at the hall. Moving image currently pays £25 per month for the film licence and any groups with live music pay a £15 licence contribution. This charge will be amended accordingly when PPL PRS issue their new invoice for this year.

Council Chamber and meeting room

The Council chamber hire has been split into three rates, chamber only, meeting room only and whole space. As the office building is registered for VAT, the hire charges were increased last year to include VAT, which increased the rates by 20%. To date the hire income received is £270. The demand for the space is currently low, I would recommend keeping the rates as they are currently for the next year.

Allotments

It has been notified to the plot holders that from 1 October 2026 a 7.5% increase will be placed on the plot holders.

The allotment income upto January 2026 is £4,351, which is slightly under last year's income of £4,823.

Dinghy and Canoe Rack – suggested 5% increase (previous year 5% increase)

We have 14 spaces for the Dinghy Park. These are currently charged at £154.00. These are all currently in use and there are two on the waiting list. A 5% increase on these would be £161.70 (£134.75 net, £26.95 vat).

We have 8 Canoe racks charged at £93 per year and these are all in use, with three on the waiting list. A 5% increase again this year would be £97.80 (£81.50 net, £16.30 vat).

We need to charge VAT on the car park spaces, so these figures are inclusive of VAT.

Dog Bags and Caddy Liners

These have always been £1 a roll and was increased to £1.25 in 2024/25.

We have updated these to sell at £1.25 per roll going forward and the community has been happy with the increase, and they are still cheaper than the average cost to purchase in a supermarket.

We have to account for VAT on dog poo bags and caddy liners, but there is still a small profit on the sales. For ease of cash and change availability, it is recommended to keep these items at £1.25 for 2026/27.

Minibus

Further discussion is required for the minibus, this will be undertaken by the minibus working group.

Cemetery

Wait for Royal Sun report 2026

Appendix -B

RFO Finance Report Update for January 2026 FTC

The precept needs to be submitted to Colchester City Council on 20th January 2026. Please see attached the precept request reports and recommendations from the Finance and Personnel committee.

b) Payments – That the circulated schedule of payments be approved. (Mandy to distribute)

Receipts – To approve the receipts reports for Cashbook one –
01/12 – 31/12/2025 £29,250.75

c) Bank Reconciliations –

31/10/2025	Confirmed Bank Balances	£621,316
30/11/2025	Confirmed Bank Balances	£595,861
31/12/2025	Confirmed Bank Balances	£579,818

d) Budgetary Control Reports at 31.12.2025

See separate budget proposal report 2026-27.

Appendix C- See attached

Appendix D- See attached